



# EPILEPSY and Related Disorders

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volume one

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THE HEALTH OF MISSIONARY FAMILIES IN CHINA

EPILEPSY FROM THE STANDPOINT OF

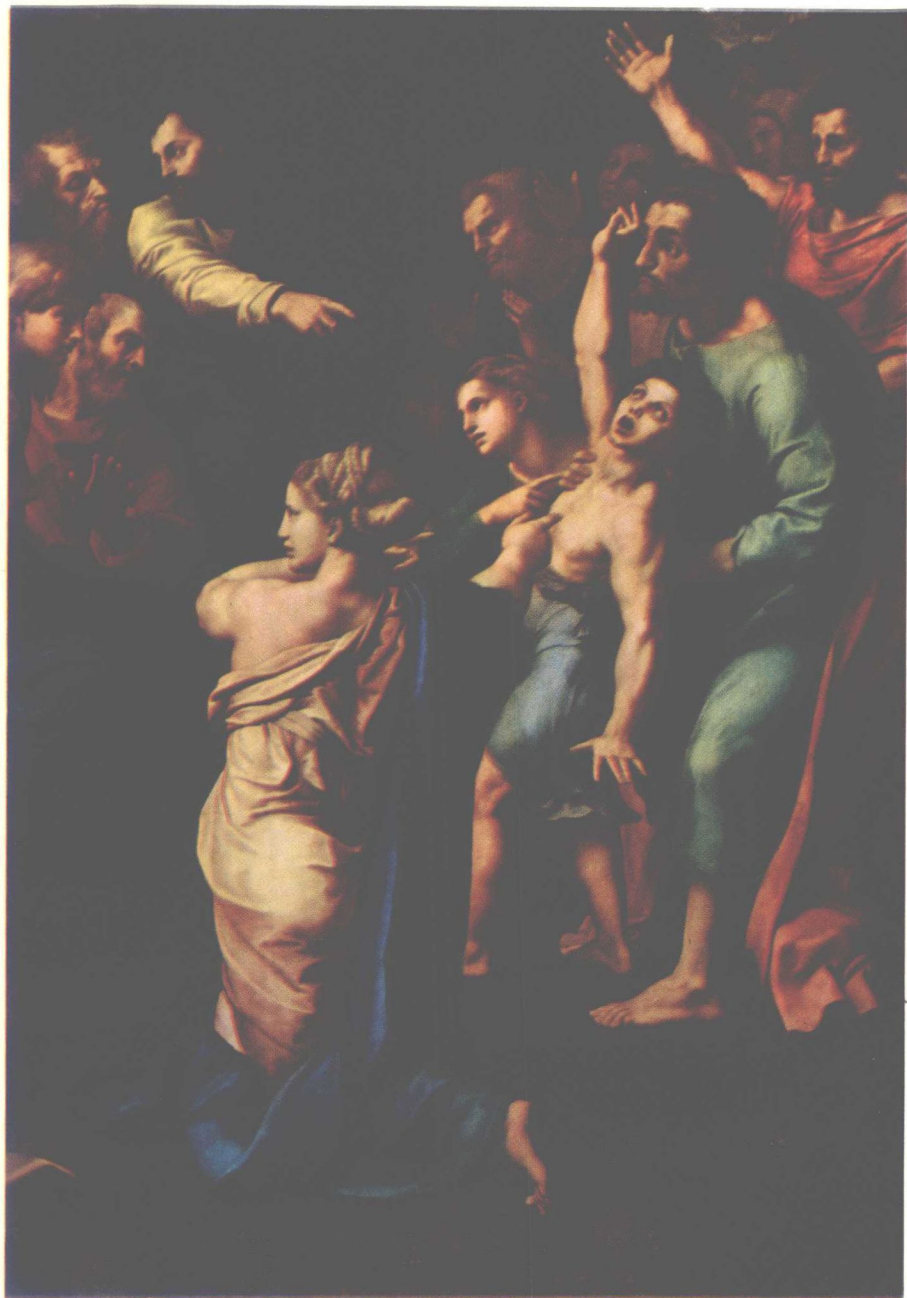
PHYSIOLOGY AND TREATMENT

(WITH STANLEY COBB)

THE HEALTH AND TURNOVER OF MISSIONARIES

SCIENCE AND SEIZURES

# **EPILEPSY and Related Disorders**



A detail of "The Transfiguration" by Raphael Sanzio (1483-1520). "Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and he suffers terribly; for often he falls into the fire, and often into the water. And I brought him to your disciples, and they could not heal him." (Matthew 17:15-16. Revised Standard Version.) This was Raphael's last painting, before his death on Good Friday, 1520, at the age of 37. The painting hangs in the Vatican Gallery in Rome.

*To, and for,  
Emma Buchtel Lennox*



this disorder. We list only a minority of these publications. The first personal pronoun, when used in the text, refers to the senior author.

Ancient textbooks of medicine commonly employed a subtitle that indicated the order of the diseases to be described, "a capite ad pedes." Nowadays, a simple "from the head to the feet" presentation is not possible for a subject as complicated and many-sided as ours. The first volume is concerned with wide orientation, with history, the many manifestations of epilepsy, and its etiology, genetic and acquired. The second volume explores mentality, origin, means of diagnosis and treatment, and the psychological and social problems involved.

Writers of books must distinguish the transient from the lasting. Knowledge of the mechanism of the brain with respect to seizures changes and, thank heaven, grows. What is written now on these matters will be of mere historical interest  $x$  years hence. On the other hand, the experiences of persons subject to seizures have never-ending interest and value. The lively case histories recounted by writers in centuries past arouse our appreciation and sympathy. Epilepsy owes its ever-fresh interest to the fact that the history and problems of each person (even if one of identical twins) differ in some important respect from those of every other person. From the many thousands of patients examined and treated during the past thirty-five years, we have selected some three hundred persons who in their history or physical findings illustrate one or, more often, several facets — clinical, electrical, or social — of this disorder of many faces. Because of the seriousness of many, these cannot be called cross-sectional or average cases.

The treatment of the epileptic is a person-to-person affair; hence, when feasible, we have substituted "persons" for "patients," and to designate the individual we prefer a name to a case number. Andree in his book *Cases of the Epilepsy, Hysteric Fits, and St. Vitus's Dance* (1753, p. 3) justified his use of patients' names in this way:

I take the Liberty of mentioning the Names at length of those who were cured at the Expence of the Hospital, deeming it a Debt due from them to the Public, to shew by their Examples, what Method may serve to cure their Benefactors, and other Fellow Creatures, afflicted with the like Diseases. A few anonymous Cases are introduced also from my private Practice, to corroborate some of the Others. And to avoid all Suspicions of Fallacy, if these should be called in Question, I can at any Time prove every Particular in relation to them.

About identification, we respect the wishes of patients or parents. However, use of a person's name emphasizes the personal relationship which exists between him and his doctor. Again, we doctors insist that epilepsy is an illness which should not call for secrecy any more than diabetes,



# Introduction

No disease is more intriguing, more protean, more pressing for solution than epilepsy and conditions related to it. These volumes attempt a broad portrayal of diverse manifestations, causes, consequences, and treatments. They attempt to provide historical perspective, to portray the medical and social problems of the individual patient, and to consider what yet needs to be learned and done.

The book *Epilepsy from the Standpoint of Physiology and Treatment* (Lennox and Cobb, 1928) summarized the knowledge of that day. *Science and Seizures* (1941, 1946) is intended primarily for the intelligent portion of the lay public. The present book, like that of Gowers (1881, 1901), strives first to meet the practical needs of the physician, and through him the patient. The writing is meant to be informal and lightened with whatever of history or of humor is at hand. We take to heart *The Complete Plain Words*, a book by Sir Ernest Gowers (1954), son of Sir William. He in his Oslerian Oration (1958) quotes Sir Clifford Allbutt: "Force, lucidity, unity, simplicity, economy of expression are virtues which we may all attain; originality will be as God pleases."

Fortunately, certain areas of knowledge are already competently dealt with. Volume II of the *Atlas of Electroencephalography* by F. A. and E. L. Gibbs (1952) is a rich museum of life-sized tracings, a wealth of clinical and electroencephalographic data, and a storehouse of some 900 references. *Epilepsy Handbook* by Gibbs and Stamps (1958) is what the name implies. Penfield and Jasper (1954), in *Epilepsy and the Functional Anatomy of the Human Brain*, deal in satisfying detail with the neuroanatomy and neurosurgery of seizures; hence, these subjects are only epitomized here.

Authors today are dismayed by the many thousands of pertinent contributions to knowledge that should be brought to the attention of the reader. Only a sample of these can be used. We (W. G. and Margaret Lennox) confess to past publication of approximately 225 articles that deal in some manner with our present subject. These appeared in 80-odd volumes or magazines, evidence of the widely scattered repercussions of

## INTRODUCTION

arthritis, or migraine does. Yet many epileptics live in a cocoon of concealment. Breaking this skein will give them and those who follow suit a new freedom. Epileptics can perform this miracle for themselves. To an extent, many of them do so in this book. "We are willing if it will help the doctors" is a common reply of patients to our query about identification. The majority of patients, or their parents to whom the matter was explained, signed a statement of consent that the full name (or a certain portion of it) should appear with the case history. Many persons could not be reached and a small number wished to remain anonymous. Males of these groups are named Hector (holding fast) and females are called Eunice (happy victory). The letter or two following these names forms a code for identification in our own records. (See the remark of the Chesney twins, page 580.)

My daughter-collaborator organized the laboratory of electroencephalography and the clinic for epileptics at the Grace-New Haven Hospital of Yale University in New Haven, and is now engaged in neurophysiological research at the Institute of Neurophysiology in Copenhagen. She has provided much needed encouragement and critical aid; and will, it is hoped, contribute more substantially to any future revision.

As with any long-term project of investigation and treatment, scores of persons have either supervised, collaborated, or assisted. Successive professorial chiefs have been Stanley Cobb (who headed the project for many years), James H. Means, Francis Peabody, Tracy J. Putnam, H. Houston Merritt, Derek Denny-Brown, Harry C. Solomon, and Charles A. Janeway. For fifteen years Frederic A. and Erna Leonhardt Gibbs were comrades-in-arms in laboratory research. Representing, as they do, a happy union of inspiration and hard, driving work, they are primarily responsible for the success of our investigations in the fields of brain circulation and electroencephalography.

Names of many of the forty-five co-authors of articles appear in the bibliography. They with secretaries, headed now by Mrs. William H. Keohane, technicians, patients, and contributors of funds (principally the Rockefeller Foundation) share in whatever virtue this book possesses and in whatever help it gives to doctors and their patients. Aside from the Harvard Epilepsy Commission and the Holman and Milton Funds of Harvard University, grants for research or training were received from the Macy, Markle, Stillman, Dazian, and Harrigan Funds. The Children's Bureau and the Institute of Neurological Diseases and Blindness (of the National Institutes of Health) have provided long-term substantial aid.

Photographs of patients and staff are by F. R. Harding, F.B.P.A.; the

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library scene is by Robert Ogilvie. Dr. Jerome K. Merlis critically perused a number of the chapters. Sandoz has contributed the color plates. The number of years spent in preparation need not be confessed. Were it not for faithful wife and fellow workers, some of them pictured opposite page 1030, and a publisher interested beyond the call of commerce, Theodore A. Phillips of Little, Brown and Company, the contents of this book would still repose in filing cabinets and in perishable memory.

Readers may thank anonymous givers for making it possible to have two volumes for approximately the price of one.

On page 1053 we mentioned that some thirty local or regional groups in the United States work in behalf of the epileptic. That page was written before the American Epilepsy Federation, which seeks to co-ordinate the work of all groups, was formed. The Chinese have a proverb that fits the present need. "Three men of one mind, yellow earth turns to gold." The authors (M.A.L. and W.G.L.) wish to promote this effort by contributing the royalty from the sale of these volumes to organizations working for the epileptic, beginning with the American Epilepsy Federation.

WILLIAM GORDON LENNOX

*March, 1960*

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